



# 5-Year Plan (2006 to 2010) North Yakima Conservation District



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## Organization of the North Yakima Conservation District

The North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD) is dedicated to maintaining North Yakima County's renewable natural resources. The District is composed of landowners, land occupiers, and concerned citizens who serve on NYCD's Board of Supervisors as volunteers. NYCD is bordered by the crest of the Cascade Mountains to the west and the Columbia River to the east with the Yakima County line and Ahtanum Ridge forming the northern and southern boundaries respectfully. The NYCD is a political subdivision of Washington State government organized under "Conservation District Law", RCW Title 89, Chapter 89.08.

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## Function of the North Yakima Conservation District

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

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## We Serve & Why

We serve: landowners; land users; land occupiers; the local community; stakeholders; natural resource users; governmental entities; interest groups; and all the people within NYCD.

Why do we serve: to promote and maintain best use(s) of natural resources; to achieve good stewardship of natural resources; to enhance, sustain and protect natural resources; to educate those we serve; and because NYCD willingly implements RCW 89.08.

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## Mission Statement of the North Yakima Conservation District

The mission of the North Yakima Conservation District is to make available technical, financial and educational resources to meet the conservation needs of the citizens who occupy and use the natural resources within our District.

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## Vision of the North Yakima Conservation District

To foster, tutor and realize a community that is rich in Natural Resource stewardship, enhancement and protection, both in ethic and in practice.

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## Values of the North Yakima Conservation District

Things NYCD stands for: Providing technical and financial opportunities; promoting harmony; providing educational resources; operating under a voluntary/grass roots ideal; implementation of resource conservation, protection and enhancement; striving for the highest and best natural resource use; delivering resource conservation in all it's forms without fear of regulatory consequences; natural resource sustainability; honesty.

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## Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

Natural Resource concerns in priority order:

**Water Quantity:** By 2009 the Cowiche Watershed will yield enough water for legal uses and fish and wildlife needs.

Strategy: By 2007 deliver water to the Cowiche Creek Water User Group (CCWUG) from the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District (YTID). Action: CCWUG and YTID agreement and implementation project being put together; develop alternative sources of water and/or implement programs/actions that benefit in-stream flows.

Strategy: Provide a metering program for all legal water uses within the Cowiche Watershed.

Action: Support landowners in meeting water measurement compliance with DOE.

**Ag Preservation-Urban Interface-Land use planning:** Complete by 2009, plan(s) for land uses that strive to maintain agricultural use.

Strategy: Work with local jurisdictions to establish regulation based on resource limitations. Action: Establish direct line of communication with Yakima County Commissioners and their staffs. This communication should go both ways (North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD)-Yakima County Commissioners (YCC), YCC-NYCD).

Strategy: Use incentives/education to reach the goal. Action: Seek, develop and evaluate programs that provide incentives, for example conservation easements and development rights acquisition; for landowners to maintain agricultural uses; implement appropriate programs to maintain agricultural uses.

Strategy: Work with state, federal, non-governmental organizations through resolution to promote alternatives to "acquisition" programs. Action: Develop MOA/MOU with these entities and move forward a resolution through WACD to achieve strategy.

**Water Quality:** By 2007 identify Water Quality issues that will lead to implementation of corrective actions.

Strategy: Assist Washington Department of Ecology (DOE) in the development and implementation of the Naches River Temperature Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process and the Local Tributaries Fecal TMDL process. Action: Implement water quality improvement programs identified by the TMDL. In areas where water quality exceeds limits encourage DOE to be specific (i.e. DNA) in identifying fecal sources.

Strategy: Provide education to the public/landowners on issues related to water quality (causes, solutions incentives etc...). Action: Use the current Cowiche Creek Tributary Team as a forum to share information and seek input, etc... Utilize NYCD outreach program.

**Fish and Wildlife:** By 2009 assist all affected landowners with compliance issues related to the Endangered Species Act and State requirements regarding fish species on privately held lands within NYCD's Geographic Priority Areas.

Strategy: Provide technical assistance and financial incentives to provide for screened diversions, removal of barriers and improve habitat. Action: Fully implement Tributary Team Plans, implement appropriate elements of the Yakima Sub-Basin Plan, develop incentive programs, and develop technical assistance programs.

**Animal Feeding Operation (AFO)/Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO):** By 2009 have all affected landowners within NYCD's Geographic Priority Areas in compliance with AFO/CAFO regulations.

Strategy: Educate affected landowners about regulations and responsibilities. Action: Staff will attend training sessions, conduct needs assessment and for the NYCD Board. Strategy: Provide technical and financial assistance to affected landowners. Action: Develop technical and financial assistance programs and fully implement the C.C. Livestock Grant.

**Noxious Weeds and Pests: (focus areas: Irrigated cropland, rangeland)** By 2010 develop an integrated pest management program.

Strategy: Work with the Yakima County Noxious Weed Board. Action: Mutually develop programs that identify areas of infestation and methods of control for implementation at the request of the landowner. Strategy: Work with appropriate entities such as WSU, WSDA, Horticultural Association; to address fruit pest issues. Action: Develop programs for Education and Outreach, and Implementation.

**Air Quality:** Continue strategy/action development and pursue related technical/financial programs.

**Range Enhancement:** Continue strategy/action development and pursue related technical/financial programs.

**Forestry:** Continue strategy/action development and pursue related technical/financial programs.

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## **Critical Geographic Areas: (map attached)**

Cowiche Watershed, Ahtanum Watershed and Wide Hollow Watershed.

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## **Information – Education Priorities and Goals:**

**Information/Education:** By 2007 increase the knowledge level of all landowners listed on NYCD's assessment role.

Strategy: Develop NYCD newsletter and website. Action: Seek funding to establish effective strategy; develop a mailing list for NYCD's newsletter; produce a semi-annual newsletter; expand website. Strategy: Establish relationships with all related organizations and entities to actively share goals and mission statements to find common ground to support each other. Action: Board Members and staff need to familiarize themselves with natural resource related and/or responsible entities in addition to inviting them to each others meetings.

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## **District Operations Priorities, Goals:**

**District Operations:** By July 2007 NYCD's Plant Material Facility will be self sufficient under all work plan elements.

Strategy: Identify financial needs of the PMF so that evaluation of individual work plan elements can cover these District liabilities. Action: PMF Committee will continue to gather financial information related to the PMF; evaluate ideas and implement those that are financially sound and/or viable to the Districts' Mission Statement. Strategy: Utilize the PMF to meet the Annual Plan and 5-year Plan of the District. Action: The PMF Committee will seek out all opportunities to utilize the PMF.

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## **Trends Impacting Conservation in the North Yakima Conservation District**

1. State budget issues, decreased funding, states deficit
  2. Agricultural vs. urban conflicts, increased pressure from development, restrictions, etc...
  3. Fish and stream driven projects vs. agricultural projects
  4. Increase need to be creative in matching funding sources for the District to operate
  5. Water Quality mandates, districts involvement
  6. Endangered Species Act issues
  7. New water quality issues, AFO/CAFO, storm water management, etc...
  8. Ability of NYCD to maintain a quality of service to it's customers
  9. A broader impact or stakeholder group
  10. District involvement in federal programs (implementation)
  11. Increased negative focus towards agricultural related issues
  12. Districts' increased recognition in ability to address resource issues
  13. Disconnection with partners in technical issues
  14. Spending an inappropriate amount of time looking for funds rather than implementing
  15. Water resource needs vs. water supply
  16. Increasing regulatory issues (Shoreline Management, Critical Areas, etc...)
  17. Need for integrated pest management.
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## **Strategies to Address Trends**

**Local, State and Federal funding issues:** Participate in legislative activities that provide conservation related funding.

## **Water Resource and Water Quality related issues including ESA, Irrigation, and Municipal uses:**

Support water storage issues, water conservation, and assist landowners in meeting W/Q criteria.

**Customer Service issues:** increase information and education outreach while maintaining a strong District implementation program(s).

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## Staffing Needs

The NYCD, in order to realize their 5-year plan proposes the following staffing needs:

- District Manager
- Financial Manager
- Information and Education Coordinator
- Resource Biologist
- Information/Technology/GIS technician
- Plant Material Facility technician
- Reception/Secretary
- Resource Planners (4)
- Engineer
- Work Crew (2, 6 member crews)

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## Annual Budget Needs

The NYCD, in order to realize their 5-year plan proposes the following annual budget (2006 dollars):

- Salary - \$808,800
- District equipment - \$36,700
- Office Supplies - \$25,500
- Rent/Utilities - \$76,500
- Vehicle - \$70,000
- Programs/Cost Share - \$3,590,000
- Training - \$49,000
- Other - \$10,000
- 5% of above - \$233,325

Total Annual Budget = \$4,899,825

(Note\* for approx. every \$1 of administration, \$3 are put on the ground)

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## Key Decision Makers

- All pertinent elected officials (federal, state and local)
- Conservation Commission Members and Staff
- Washington Association of Conservation Districts and WACD Executive Director
- Partner Entities (Natural Resource Conservation Service, Resource Conservation & Development, Department of Ecology, Bureau of Reclamation, United States Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, WSU Extension, etc...)
- Stakeholder Groups (Washington Cattlemen's Association, Hop Growers of Washington, Farm Bureau, Irrigation Districts, etc...)
- Environmental Groups (Nature Conservancy, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Cowiche Canyon Conservancy, etc...)

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## Priority Actions – 12 Months

| Action   | Begin Date | End Date   |
|--|------------|------------|
| <b>Water Quantity:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CCWUG and YTID agreement and implementation project being put together; develop alternative sources of water and/or implement programs/actions that benefit in-stream flows.</li></ul>        | July 2005  | April 2007 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support landowners in meeting water measurement compliance with DOE.</li></ul>   | July 2005  | April 2009 |
| <b>Ag Preservation-Urban Interface-Land use planning:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish direct line of communication with Yakima County Commissioners and their staffs, this communication should be both ways (NYCD-YCC, YCC-</li></ul> | July       | June       |

|  |           |               |
|--|-----------|---------------|
| NYCD).   | 2005      | 2009          |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek, develop and evaluate programs that provide incentives for landowners to maintain agricultural uses; implement appropriate programs to maintain agricultural uses.</li> </ul>                          | July 2005 | Cont.         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop MOA/MOU with these entities and move forward a resolution through WACD to achieve strategy.</li> </ul>  | May 2006  | December 2007 |
| <b>Water Quality:</b>  |           |               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement water quality improvement programs identified by the TMDL's. In areas where water quality exceeds limits encourage DOE to be specific (i.e. DNA) in identifying sources.</li> </ul>               | July 2005 | June 2009     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the current Cowiche Creek Tributary Team as a forum to share information and seek input, etc...; utilize NYCD outreach program.</li> </ul>  | July 2005 | June 2009     |
| <b>Fish and Wildlife:</b>  |           |               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully implement Tributary Team Plans, implement appropriate elements of the Yakima Sub-Basin Plan, develop incentive programs, and develop technical assistance programs.</li> </ul>                        | July 2005 | June 2009     |
| <b>AFO/CAFO:</b>   |           |               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff will attend training sessions and share vital information with the NYCD Board for dissemination to the public.</li> </ul>   | July 2005 | June 2007     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop technical and financial assistance programs.</li> </ul>   | July 2005 | June 2007     |
| <b>Noxious Weeds and Pests: (focus areas: Irrigated Cropland, rangeland)</b>   |           |               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mutually develop programs that identify areas of infestation and methods of control for implementation at the request of the landowner.</li> </ul>  | May 2006  | June 2010     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop programs for Education and Outreach, and Implementation.</li> </ul>   | May 2006  | June 2007     |
| <b>Information/Education:</b>  |           |               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek funding to establish effective strategy; develop a mailing list for NYCD's newsletter; produce a semi-annual newsletter; expand website.</li> </ul>  | May 2006  | July 2007     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board Members and staff need to familiarize themselves with natural resource related and/or responsible entities in addition to inviting them to each others meetings.</li> </ul>                           | July 2005 | Cont.         |
| <b>District Operations:</b>  |           |               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PMF Committee will continue to gather financial information related to the PMF; evaluate ideas and implement those that are financially sound and/or viable to the Districts' Mission Statement.</li> </ul> | May 2006  | June 2007     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The PMF Committee will seek out all opportunities to utilize the PMF.</li> </ul>  | May 2006  | Cont.         |

**Washington Conservation Districts assisting land Managers with their conservation choices**





CCWUA/YTID Project Area



Lesh Ditch Project - completed



YTAHP – Technical Work Group



YTAHP – Tributary Team Meeting



AFO/CAFO Livestock concerns



Garretson Project – under construction



CSP – Naches Watershed



Riparian Habitat Improvement



Irrigation Metering and Fish Screening

